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L E T T E R

T O

Sir GEORGE COLEBROOKE, Bart.

On the Subjects of

SUPERVISION and DIVIDEND.

By an old PROPRIETOR, and former SERVANT
of the EAST INDIA COMPANY.

Hic niger est, hunc tu Romane caveto! HOR.

L O N D O N,

Printed for G. KEARSLEY, No. 1, LUDGATE-STREET,

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SUPERVISION and DIVIDEND.

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By an old Proprietor, and former Servant
of the East India Company.

His right of Birth in England, &c. &c. &c.

Printed for C. D. M. & Co. by J. Lubbock, Stationer, &c. &c. &c.



A
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T O
SIR GEORGE COLEBROOKE, BART.

TO complain of the *indisposition* of public revenue, to rail at the present professors of power—to lament the past, and conceive extravagant hopes of the future, are the common dispositions of the greatest part of mankind; who, perhaps, from a consciousness of the corruption of their own hearts, as well as a jealousy in being precluded as sharers in the *loaves and fishes*, too often form the grounds of their complaint; yet, though these humours have existed in all times—all times have not been alike—it is the province of impartial enquiry

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to

to distinguish that complaint, which marks the general depravity of human nature, from that which is wrung from the honest heart in the hour of oppression, tyranny, and speculation.

Nobody, I believe, will consider it merely as the language of spleen, or disappointment, to say there is something particularly alarming in the present conjuncture of East India affairs; there is hardly a man from the country proprietor, who knows no more of the state of the company than giving his assent to his quarterly dividend, to the most penetrating and sagacious, who will not *partly* join in this assertion, and at least say "Something should be done;" for, indeed, what man of reason and humanity can hold any other language, when your government abroad is at once dreaded and contemned.—When your laws change themselves from being the edicts of wisdom and justice, to the exactions of tyranny and plunder—when rank, office and title, with all the solemn plausibilities of the world, are degraded and dishonoured, when nothing but separate interests and confusion prevail, when the dependencies of your servants are well nigh thrown off—and when no shadow of unanimity

unanimity remains, save an uniform system of oppression, robbery, and murder.

Though I could blacken the whole of these pages, and even these would be insufficient to particularise the several degrees of barbarity acted by your servants abroad—I shall spare the horrid detail—they are as well known by the world as they have been felt by the unhappy sufferers; and that they were particularly known to you in their most odious lights, appear upon your own books in two instances*, perhaps the most horrid, and derogatory to the common principles of justice that ever disgraced the annals of Christianity.

But before I proceed farther, it may be here asked (and to a person totally unacquainted with the affairs of direction, with some plausibility too) why I should apply myself parti-

* The first was an old woman who had been summoned to give an account upon oath of all the acts of gallantry she had been guilty of in her youth, and fined for each a certain number of rupees. The other, a woman with child, who was murdered, and though the fact was sufficiently proved by two evidences, yet by a cavil of the Mahomedan law, which requires a certain number of people to be eye-witnesses, the murderer was acquitted.

cularly to you, who are only the president of a body, and consequently entitled to no other privilege than that of a casting voice amongst twenty three other directors?—But I will appeal to any proprietor who has in any respect paid the least attendance to general courts—whether he does not evidently see you are the great mover of this machine?—that all the questions carried either originate from you, or have your hearty concurrence.—That you have silenced the *calculation* of *Manship*—the *tongue* of *Dempster*, together with the *territorial* and *plausible* knowledge of *Sullivan*.—In short, I will appeal to the candour of his breast—whether he does not see, in the most plain and legible manner imaginable, the full effects of your over-ruling influence in every the minutest article of directorial department.

From such glaring conviction then, on my side, with others, which I shall shew by the way—I am grounded, beyond the possibility of a mistake, in addressing myself to you on this occasion, and considering you, and you alone, as the person whom I am to call to account, as a man, for the miseries of my fellow creatures, as a proprietor, for the plunder of my property.

Nor,

Nor, upon due consideration, will the shadow of *temerity* lie with me on this account.— When the affairs of a great commercial company are disconnected, and confused, like those of the nation, private people are, by the spirit of all laws, justified in stepping out of their ordinary sphere; — at that time they enjoy a privilege of more than idle lamentation over what has been done, or doing; 'tis theirs to search narrowly, and reason manfully; and if they should be so fortunate to discover the author of their misfortunes — “no place so holy” — no fortune so extensive, should screen such a delinquent from being dragged to the notice — to the resentment, of an injured public.

Having said thus much, I shall freely enter into some parts of your directional conduct; wherein, as “I shall nothing extenuate, so I shall not set down ought in malice.”

When the complaints of the peculations of your servants, with their subversion of all law, order, and humanity, had first reached your ears, as chairman of the direction, you can inform the world better than I can; but that you was called upon so far back as the year 1770,
you

you cannot deny. Governor Johnson, Mr. Creighton, and Mr. Dempster, (which last gentleman has probably, by this time, *forgot* he ever differed with you in opinion) were bold in their descriptions of the miseries of their fellow creatures abroad — but as these declamations were usually made in general courts called for other purposes, you artfully availed yourself of their informality — by either calling to the question, or at most, when hard prest, giving a short answer “ that an enquiry should be soon made into those abuses, and that the preliminaries were already in train.”

Mr. Purling succeeded to your chair, not because you wanted interest to support it longer (unfortunately for the proprietors, they feel an *overgrown fortune* outweighs every consideration of merit) but because the laws are positive no chairman shall set above three years successively, in that office; and here when one comes to consider the perilous situation of so many millions of suffering people — (and if we except the famine which for some time raged in Bengal) not suffering from casualties, or outward strokes of Providence, but from the rapacity and cruelty of your servants, one would wonder

wonder how any business, of never so momentous a concern, could possibly intervene to postpone, even for an instant, the examination of a work so necessary for the interests of the company—so congenial to the rights of humanity;—but notwithstanding the force of these powerful claims—they passed unnoticed, till Mr. Purling's directorship was out, and you ascended the chair once more.

At that period the proprietors became clamorous—the relief they expected from parliament, together with the further information, which they were led to think they might gather from the reports of the select committee appointed by the house of commons to enquire into East India affairs, were vanished. This last affair indeed had for some time taken possession of their minds, and deterred them from stirring till the examination was over, and till consequently their grounds were enlarged. But how miserably were their views disappointed! This fly-trap of state, however gorgeously fitted up, and painted from without, had no solid furniture within; and though corruption was to be tumbled from it's throne, as Atè was from heaven, notwithstanding it's being protected

tested with all the riches of the East, and the *dignity of a Lord* — yet, after a pompous examination of several weeks, they were repaid with nothing more than a dry detail of uninteresting questions and answers, without having either their views enlarged, or any effective charges brought home.

These prospects evaporating at once, roused the spirit of the proprietors — a few anecdotes had reached the ears of some of the most intelligent, and feeling people outside the bar, and were communicated by them to a general court. When these anecdotes, (though upon your books for some months) became public — humanity recoiled at them — they were such as would have disgraced this country in its original barbarism. Every man, save yourself, and dependents, found himself cried upon by every claim he had to that epithet, to resent such injuries. They did so, and collectively, with a voice not to be resisted, called aloud for justice and reformation. This general attack was not to be got over — but here, with your usual cunning, you made a merit of necessity, and, with a seeming shew of candour, called a court officially for this purpose in the month of August last.

When

When this court was called, you rose up, and, with all the affectation of feeling for what was done, told the proprietors, “that the miseries, and impositions on the people in Bengal, Fort St. George, and Bombay, were such as called aloud for redress — and that the cause of convening them on that occasion, was to put a stop to those iniquitous practices, by sending out a superintending commission.” Here, indeed, you attempted to enter into the immediate necessity of this measure, by stating the increasing expences of the military and forts in those parts; the building of the latter, you said, in the course of three years, amounted to above 800,000*l*. That there were some taxes imposed on the people by the company’s servants, which were never accounted for, or carried to their credit, particularly the Mutou and Bazar duties, which brought a considerable revenue, and which were only applied as objects of plunder. That the administration of justice was even in a much worse state than that of commerce, for that the most wanton and arbitrary acts capriciously superseded all law and equity.

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That the court of directors, therefore, fully sensible of all these grievances (and no wonder *feeling* them for near two years) wished to have this matter freely discussed by the proprietors at large; and, for this purpose, they had reduced their sentiments to the following propositions:

“That the proprietors do agree with the court of directors, that a superintending commission be immediately sent out, to correct the abuses carrying on in Bengal, Fort St. George, and Bombay.”

This speech was received with applause by some, and seconded by other well-meaning proprietors, who took it for granted you had regulated your words by the pulses of your heart; but those who knew you best were not to be duped in this manner — they saw, that under the pretence of regulating disorders abroad, you had resolved to enrich some needy dependents of your own, by sending them out supervisors, or comptrollers, and by giving them every latitude, from an unlimited extension of power, to enrich themselves by continued plunder, and depredation; their arguments

arguments were forcible, and intelligent, and were substantially as follow:

“This commission (said the opposition) seems illegal and inexpedient. It is illegal, because the company has no authority to grant such unlimited power to any of it's servants. The presidents and councils of your settlements in India are the highest authority that you can establish in that quarter of the world; for they derive their power not only from you, but likewise from the legislature, which has enacted laws specifying their number, and the extent of their jurisdiction. Since then, they are established by statute, can you annul them, by granting to any set of men a power paramount to them all? By no means. All, that you can do, is to divest them of their office, and appoint others, equal in number, in their room: To these you can delegate all the power of which you are yourselves legally possessed, and no more.”

To these other arguments, which discovered great knowledge and intimacy with your settlements abroad, were added, and which I am induced, from the utility they may still produce, to recapitulate.

“ That, previous to the investiture of any set of men with power, a complete survey of all the lands should be made, and the country properly divided; for as the complaints lay principally against the collectors of your duties, the remedy should be there applied, that each village and district should be assessed in such manner as the natives should best agree on themselves, the whole to be paid into the hands of collectors, who should receive certain salaries for their trouble. This mode, properly established, it was urged, would be a means of relieving the country greatly, it would afford handsome salaries to collectors, yet bring a greater, more certain, and more chearfully contributed revenue to the government, than what has ever been done before; the people would thus likewise know what they had to pay, and if too highly assessed, on a proper representation to the board of revenue, could have their grievances properly attended to.

It was likewise urged, “ that such a regulation would lead to another matter of no small importance—the investments of the company; for as the manufacturers in general were the cultivators of the land, the rent may be taken

ken in goods ; nor could foreign nations complain of this mode, were the tenants prohibited from selling them till the rent of their grounds were paid : to this then should be added open markets, under proper regulations, where every body should have free liberty to traffic.

The very sensible and judicious plan proposed some time since by Mr. Dow, enlarged and adopted by Mr. Pattullo, was likewise remarked upon as a very rational scheme, provided it could but be sanctioned by government. The company, and the nation, they said, they were persuaded, would find infinite advantages from it, and that it would make Bengal, in particular, flourish above every other country in Asia ; nor would the execution of it, under the sanction of a British act of parliament, be difficult or visionary."

In this concise, this distinct, and intelligent manner, did the independent proprietors point out methods for the relief of grievances in Bengal — Grievances which they asserted, though desperate, far from being incurable ; for though they admitted that the people there were, of late, much worse off than they were formerly

formerly under their own native sovereigns, yet they could readily perceive, with a little just policy and good management, they may not only soon be relieved, but established on more permanent grounds.

Numerous laws, they said, may be talked of, and some perhaps found it their particular interest to echo this doctrine; but these would, by no means, answer the purpose, so well as a few, clear and distinct laws, framed in the spirit of equity and judgment, and adapted to the meridian of the country. It would be always found the best policy not to vex, or perplex them with wire-drawn ideal systems, unsuitable to their genius and climate, and which could never fail of disgusting the generality of a people, who are naturally indolent, and whose minds are not much enlarged, whilst it would give ample opportunities to the artful and designing to practise with success the reigning vices of the country—fraud and speculation.

What ought first, and most necessarily to be done in respect to the laws, they said, should be after finishing the survey of the country, to get as exact an account as possible of the
number

number of inhabitants, their occupations, and possessions. Pretty just computations of the produce of the ground may be made at the same time, if proper methods were taken with that intention: when these were obtained, it would be no difficult matter to divide, and subdivide, the country into proper districts and divisions, where courts of progressive authority, at proper distances, may be established, terminating in a provincial court (except in matters of a certain amount) when the appeal may be made to England.

That for the practices of those courts a written law should be constructed, which could never be made applicable to their ideas, except by persons on the spot, distinguished for their knowledge, humanity, and discretion, who should dedicate their time, and application to a work of such importance.

Much therefore was necessary to be left to the discretion of the judges, who still ought to be made amenable to superior judges, and so on to the higher provincial court, the judges of which may be made answerable for their conduct, not whilst in office, but before they should depart the country: on which account
both

both they, and all Europeans in power, and station, should not be permitted to leave it, till a certain time after their having quitted their employments, and their receding to the condition of private persons.—On this principle none would be afraid to sue, and have either justice obtained upon them there, or proofs registered in a regular manner, so as to appear against them else where with effect.

As the people were not naturally sanguinary in their disposition, but rather fearful, and tractable, they, without much reluctance, submit to the will of their rulers, unless when pushed too hard, and even then their remedy is not opposition, but a flight to the nearest neighbourhood, when there is a prospect of altering their condition for the better: on this account capital punishments should very rarely be inflicted on them, and that only for a few crimes; for though, according to our reasoning, they may be just, yet no reasoning could ever induce them to think, so many capital punishments as are in our laws, by any means, consistent with justice and humanity.

Could the use of juries be likewise established in this country, they urged, it would be
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of excellent service; they then could never repine at their judgments, as the supposition would always lie, they were directed by candour and impartiality; beside, it would so change the whole face of the present absolute manner of decision for the better, that they would adopt it with all the transports of a guardian law, calculated to mediate between them, and their present iron law givers.

To these regulations was finally proposed a mode of deciding property, by adopting a custom of their own, time immemorial, and which, with propriety, and advantage, may be established into a law, and that was *deciding their differences by arbitration*; a mode always congenial to the sentiments of a people undebauched by the quirks of the law, and which would by no means discredit the most enlightened country in the most enlightened age. To establish this, therefore, under proper regulations, so as not to interfere with their particular casts and religions, would be highly serviceable, and the more so, as it would be flattering their own understandings, by adopting a law, to which they were originally accustomed to, and to which they always submitted with chearfulness."

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Such were the arguments which your proposal gave birth to the first court day; but you artfully perceiving your scheme was not then ripe enough to carry into execution, *bad* the day spun out in futile replies, and digressive rejoinders, till it became necessary to postpone the further consideration of it till the Wednesday following.

On that day the train was properly laid, both behind and before the bar — Sir James Hodges, that redoubted knight of adventure, who seems gifted by nature with all the qualities of an inferior Machiavel, was prepared to strengthen the adjourned question by an amendment, which at once unmasked the design of direction, by shewing the degree of power they wanted to share in it. He accordingly opened the debate by proposing the following amendment:

“ And that it be refered to the court of directors to prepare such commission — recommend proper persons to carry the same into execution, and report their proceeding to a general court.”

The proprietors acquainted with your usual art, and who dreaded something concealed under the specious appearance of the candor you professed

professed on the first general court, now had every fear confirmed—They therefore argued, and with great propriety, “that the question, being an adjourned question, ought to be taken up precisely on the same ground it stood the last court day; that it was now rendered complex, as involving propositions together, which ought, by all the rules of order, to be kept separate; that they understood, from your speech on the opening of the business, that the directors wanted nothing more than a conference with propriety to receive their advice, and conduct measures accordingly; but, that this amendment fairly shewed them, that there was an endeavour to surprise the court into giving more power to the directors than either the first question, or their own sentiments (as echoed by you) implied; that it was likewise highly necessary to determine on the measure itself, before any power should be given to proceed to the nomination of men, nor could the expediency of such an extraordinary commission be clearly assented to, or denied, till it should appear, whether a regular, and well digested plan was formed for them to execute; or, on the contrary, whether they were to be sent out with extraordinary and unlimited powers.” To

To these arguments it was answered, " that there was no impropriety or inconsistency in the amendment proposed ; that on the contrary, the mover of the question had laid his ground for this amendment at the last court, by declaring his wish, that any gentleman would aid him to render his motion more comprehensive and decisive ; that he had fully considered the matter during the week's adjournment, and had formed it, to the best of his abilities, for what he conceived to be the true interest of the company. It was also argued, that there was no sort of complexity in the question amended ; for in case it should be decided by the ballot, that a supervision is inexpedient, then the rest of the question fell entirely to the ground ; that every part of the directors conduct was diametrically opposite to any wish, much less any attempt, to lead the proprietors by trick or surprise ; that if they had been so inclined, they had a precedent even for filling up the commission before they applied to the court of proprietors ; but on the contrary, great care had been taken to bring the matter as entire and as unembarrassed as possible before the general court for a full and fair discussion ; that it was necessary to make the question as comprehensive

comprehensive as possible, to enable the directors to treat properly with the men who might be thought fit to execute the commission; for that great difficulties had occurred for two years past on this subject; applications having been made by many gentlemen of known abilities, who had shewn reluctance to undertake such a commission, principally because of the limited powers which they thought were vested in the proposers; that even the late supervision had not gone out without a plan; but that this plan would be now more compleat by having had time to collect the nature of the abuses better (several of which had only come to light last winter) and to digest it more regularly."

Though those answers were not at all satisfactory, or in confutation to what had been advanced on the opposite side, they were all that were offered on this day, the grand business of which was, to spin it out till the house thinned, and then put the question.

On the holding up of hands on this question I remember you declared upon your honour, you could not well tell "whether this *here* side, or that *there* side had it:" therefore you called for a division. Sir J. Hodges was appointed teller for the ayes (a thing too rather unusual on his

own question;) and so eager was he to execute this favourite commission, that he lost his usual duplicity in concealing it, for "grinning horribly a ghastly smile," he declared a majority of *seventeen* in favour of the amended question.

The motion being thus decided, it was proposed, on account of the lateness of the day, to adjourn the consideration of it to the Wednesday following, which was accordingly done, and on that day, the whole of the question (seemingly so fabricated by the proprietors, though all the work of your secret influence) stood thus:

"That this court do agree with the court of directors in their opinion, that the present state of the company's affairs at Bengal, Fort St. George, and Bombay, doth require a superintending commission with extraordinary powers, and that it be referred to the court of directors to prepare such commission, recommend proper persons to carry the same into execution, and report their proceedings to a general court."

As the question now was thus *pieced* in every respect to your mind, the *independent* proprietors exerted themselves on this day to prevent it's being carried, particularly General Smith, Mr.

Lc

Le Maitre, and Mr. Creighton. They urged, “ that the disobedience of their servants abroad was often owing to the *ignorance* of direction at home, whose orders, if executed, would be very detrimental to the company. Here they gave some instances relative to the *about*, and sending home bullion. They then proved the want of confidence shewn by direction with their allies abroad, by suffering *Chundesaib*’s family to be given up to Hyder Naig at Madras; that this forfeiture of their honour could not fail of alienating Mahomed Ally’s affections from us, as Chundesaib was his competitor for the subaship of the Carnatic.”

“ That they could not well blame their servants abroad for the abuses laid to their charge, since they themselves were, in fact, the promoters of it, by a mode of supplying their settlements with *writers* who dishonoured their patronage ; that formerly that *character* was honourable, and the event justified that appellation. They were then plain, docile, mercantile youths, who, by great attention to business, increase of knowledge, and frugality, generally rose, by progressive steps, to the first situations ; and the company’s affairs, under such agents, prospered accordingly ; — that
now

now the case was quite altered — Persons were sent out no way qualified, or initiated in mercantile affairs, mere Macaroni merchants — “fit only for capering in a lady’s chamber to “the lascivious pleasing of a lute,” with no other view than to encrease their own fortunes by every species of plunder. That this was no exaggerated account, for that the very great interest *now* made to procure that employment fully proved it; as lately appeared by a peeress (Lady Bute) who forewent all the dignity of her character to solicit, in the most conciliating terms, such a place for her son.”

“Under all this abuse of directorial power, said they, can it be imagined, extended as your affairs now are, can possibly prosper? Surely, no! Be more uniform than in your manner; make examples of such of your servants, without distinction, who have peculated, or otherwise betrayed their trusts; let your laws be carefully revised, and then let them operate with equal justice on all; let the poor miserable natives have equal advantages of trade, and convince them you are only their protectors, not their tyrants: in short, act with more vigour and impartiality behind the bar, and there will be little or no occasion for a superintending

intending commiſſion, which may heal the evils complained of only for a time, to break out with redoubled violence."

Such an informed inveſtigation into your affairs, opened with candour, and a deſire to benefit the general good of the company, could not be met, *even by you*, in the line of oppoſition: you, therefore, aſſured the court, "that they might model the queſtion as they pleaſed, either taking it as it ſtood, or dividing it into two or more propoſitions; for that you, with the court of directors, had nothing in view but the good of the company, and diſcharging your truſt with fidelity."

Whether Mr. Creighton, who, upon all occaſions, has ſhewn great knowledge, as well as great attention, to the company's affairs; was duped for the moment by ſo *ſpecious* a declaration, or whether he ſaw through your drift, and wanted to ſurprize you in the critical minute, I cannot determine, either way, he ſhewed his deſire to ſerve the company; for he inſtantly ſeized on the opportunity, and, complimenting your candour for ſuch a declaration, ſaid, "that every gentleman preſent ought to meet a propoſition ſo fair with equal freedom:" he, therefore, moved an

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amendment

mendment, to keep to the two first parts of the question, and leave out Sir James Hodge's addition.

Little expecting this, your confession was palpable; insomuch so, that on Mr. Creighton's motion being seconded, and spoke to very spiritedly, you was full *three quarters of an hour* before you could arrange your ideas clear enough to put the question in order; however, some *recruits* appearing at this time, rallied your drooping spirits, and, the question being put, it passed in the *negative*, to your very visible satisfaction.

This question, the Wednesday following, coming to be tried by *ballot*, it is needless to inform the intelligent proprietor it was carried to your warmest wishes. This is the line of battle where you would desire to meet all your opponents; as here all your manœuvres can be practised with more safety, secrecy, and certainty: for instance, a gouty, or otherwise infirm proprietor, who probably would not choose to risque his health by sitting five or six hours, in a cold *general court*, can be carried in a close chair, to a warm *ballotting room*, and meet with no delay; a number of country proprietors, likewise, who would choose to re-

turn

turn the same day they come to town, are often deprived of doing so, by the late sitting of a *general court*; whereas, on a *ballot*, they can choose their own hour: the ladies too, whose delicacy forbids them mingling with men in the hour of debate and resolution, may, with the greatest propriety and decorum, support a ballot by their vote; in short, "such are the conveniences, together with the corrupted currents of this world," that, give you but time and opportunity to play off the engines of your influence, you are always as sure of gaining a *majority* in Leadenhall-street, as the first Lord of the treasury is in a superior assembly.

Having thus given a *real* representation of your conduct in carrying this question of supervision, it will be necessary to review some of the apparent motives which influenced your conduct on this occasion.

When you found it necessary to take up this question originally, your grand object was, to contrive every part of it so, as to let it appear an act of proprietary recommended to direction: for this purpose, on the first meeting, you *seemingly* came with *clean hands* into the court, and told the proprietors to give you some grounds to build upon; all you said, "some-

thing was necessary to be done but, *what* must rest with themselves ; that pandour* to your ambition and his own, (having a son in the East India service) was the person appointed to betray the rights of the proprietary—by arts too black to mention, and some of them too deep to be come at, you succeeded, step by step, till you had gained every thing you had formed to yourself on the first out-set. The desideratum thus obtained, the consequences are easily deduced ; you have now the *framing a commission, with extraordinary powers*, for the future government of fifteen million of people ; and what those powers will be, are easily deduced from the whole tenor of your life, where *ambition* has prevailed over every *duty*, *interest* over every *feeling*.

By the carrying of this question you are likewise entrusted with *the recommendation of proper persons to carry this commission into execution*, a latitude that *numbers* are almost insufficient to calculate the depredations it may give birth to, where your hungry dependents, with those of your brothers in iniquity, will not only be gorged with the vitals of the people, but

* Sir James Hodges,

their

their dependents — dependents — I had almost said, *ad infinitum*.

It is true, indeed, we are, in some respect, *comforted* by the clause in the tail of the question, where the directors are obliged “to report their proceedings to a general court,” could any comfort arise from that quarter: but, alas! as Pope says, “what must be the priests where the god is a *monkey*?” in short, what must the majority of a General Court be, when COLEBROOKE, and CORRUPTION influence their determinations?

But I must quit this subject to turn to one of a more important nature, would to God I could say, for the sake of many innocent hundreds, a less iniquitous one; and that is, your postponing the half-yearly dividend, usually settled at Michaelmas, to Christmas next; an act, that in it's variety of fatal consequences, “blurs the very grace of Modesty, and calls Virtue hypocrite:” But that I may take in review the whole of this *unfeeling* procedure, it will be necessary to recur to the proceedings of last October, as this retrogression will set the whole of your conduct in that real point of view, though not the most amiable the truest medium to be looked at.

At

At that time Mr. Manship, a gentleman of great notoriety in the *numerical* world, and repeatedly allowed to be so both from the inside and outside the bar, set himself singly in opposition against the other twenty-three directors relative to the then dividend; he affirmed "their cash account was falsely stated, that in their estimates they had over-valued many articles which were subject to great losses, and that, above all, the period it was brought up to was *critical*; as towards the latter end of the same month the debtor side would be chargeable with many payments."

These arguments, urged on the side of caution, and attention to the welfare and prosperity of the company, were principally overruled by you, who, though not in the direction, preserved every influence behind the bar which the weight of money and connections could give you, and all this for the purposes of keeping up the stock; not that the interest of the company, in the smallest instance, operated as an object, but that having great property of your own at that time in the East India funds, you was determined, let what will be the consequences, to *keep it up* till such time as you thought it more your interest to lower it.

For

For this purpose, you, at the head of eight more proprietors, called a general court, in which you had interest enough, in the then capacity of a common proprietor, to over-rule Mr. Manship's motion, and have the half yearly dividend confirmed at six one-fourth *per cent.* and not satisfied with this, by way of triumph to the manœuvre, at the same time obtained a vote of thanks from the gulled proprietary.

Notwithstanding you had thus gained your point, several proprietors, who had formed their knowledge upon more permanent and satisfactory informations than are usually picked up in general courts, saw that the time was approaching, when East India stock must fall, in proportion to the unnatural violence with which it was repelled, they, consequently, had prudence enough to guard against the event; whilst others, who looked at things but superficially, and thought themselves secured by the nominal price of dividend, sat down, like the dreamers in the South-Sea, perfectly contented.

But money, like water, will never mount above it's level: the heavy bills drawn upon direction from Bengal, the indemnity on teas
expiring,

expiring, together with the annual payment of 400,000*l.* to government, all coming down, almost at one period, proved Mr. Manship's former assertions to be judiciously founded, and stock accordingly fell, in a very little time, above twenty-five *per cent.* to the ruin of a number of families, who derived their principal support from this source.

Conscious that you were the cause of all this mischief, another man, less an adept in this species of guilt, would have deserted the chair, at least for a time, to avoid a congress with a people, a number of whom he had thus designedly stripped of their property, some of them to the utter ruin of themselves and families; but you had that about you which was very capable of reversing that adage of Horace,—" *Mens consci sibi mali, nulla pallestere culpa.*" You knew your proficiency in guilt, and appeared at the general quarterly court of the 23d of September last.

It would be laughable, to the last degree, were not the consequences so importantly serious, to paint you in the ridiculous situation you stood in that day. You frequently put me in mind of a highwayman on his first examination before Sir John Fielding, who, though

though he, as well as the party robbed, were conscious of his guilt, yet, struggling for life, would attempt proving an alibi, or grasp at any shadow of exculpation; but least the world should lose such an *original picture* (though the peculative part will never be erased from many a suffering bosom) I shall venture to give it to them, as near as I can, from the life.

When the court met, and the clerk had prepared the way for his *sovereign* to rise, you got up, and, with an *hesitation* which sufficiently marked your guilt, thus substantially proceeded:

“ That you was commissioned, by the court of directors, to acquaint the proprietors that they could not recommend any dividend for Christmas next, which they were properly qualified to do by act of parliament; and, in short, you thought this *bere* way was so much the better in future, as nothing but *certain* value would be brought up to the cash account, and people would know, with more precision, what they had to depend upon.

“ That the directors had, at present, no cash in hand, but that they had entered into a negotiation with government to lend them a sum equal to their wants—which *bere* wants came

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like a thunder clap upon them, unknown to any body, till the treasurer had told you there was not a sou in the chest, and many bills presented for payment which you knew nothing about, as the former court of directors had accepted them without informing you of it.

“ Besides all this, a very large sum had come upon them for, *in the dark*, the indemnity on teas; nor could any of them foresee it, *because* the agreement had been entered into some years back. That the estimates of last year were made out clearly, fairly, and honourably; although it would have been more to the honour of the last court of directors, if they had been made out more clearly, fairly, and honourably; but that was nothing to this *here* purpose, all these distresses were owing to the bills from Bengal, which you would have been for protesting, had you been behind the bar when they were presented for acceptance.”

Though the bulk of the proprietary were prepared, by the previous fall of stock, for the lowering of the dividend, they were petrified at your effrontery in saying you could strike no dividend at all, and much more so, at the arguments you used to support that opinion—
arguments

arguments the most absurd, contradictory, and unfair that perhaps were ever attempted to be played off against the understandings of mankind.—Mr. Creighton very spiritedly told you so, previously asking you, whether you was not afraid of the “spectres of the widow and fatherless haunting you for what you had done.” He likewise shewed, to the full conviction of the unbiassed part of the court, “that the directors must, from the nature of things, have been in possession of the secret of their present embarrassments some years ago; for that the intelligence of the Bengal bills had come to their hands so far back as the year 1770, and that the indemnity on tea was subject to a very nice calculation; we must therefore, says he, look for the cause of our distresses elsewhere, and he was much afraid they would be found behind the bar.”

“He then adverted to the year 1769, and called upon the deputy chairman to know, whether he had not then, at his own desire, put an estimate into his hands, shewing that, by the agreement with government, the company must run in debt at least 300,000l. per ann. more than they owed at that time; that it was true he had taken the war in the Car-

natic into that calculation, but the court would remember that, at the last two general courts, the deputy chairman had again and again recited extra expences abroad, far exceeding what he had stated for the Carnatic war in that calculation, and therefore he must still believe his calculation was right till he saw it proved otherwise; he called loudly on the directors to say why they had not before made the constituents acquainted with their present situation, which they must have foreseen at least twelve months ago—But guilty silence held their tongues.”

“ He then desired the proceedings of a general court, called last October by *you*, might be read, which was accordingly done, and contained the vote of thanks to the court of directors, for recommending a dividend of six one fourth per cent. in contradiction to the opinion of a very accurate director, who affirmed the cash account was falsely stated. Here he arraigned the whole conduct of the court for several years back in a very spirited and judicious manner; and, after having held up all your malversations, for some time, to the public view of the proprietary, concluded, by proposing the following question :

“ That

“ That a committee of nine proprietors, actually possessed of five hundred pounds stock, or upwards, be chosen by ballot, to inspect into the general state of the company's affairs, and report the same to a general court.”

Had all been fair and honourable within, you must have acquiesced under so candid a proposal; for, taking the state of the company's affairs upon your own ground, what had you to fear from it? Here was a point you was mistaken in, and, in consequence of that mistake, reduced to a very great dilemma. In that situation, What could be more natural and equitable, than to consign, for a time, the investigation of the causes which produced this embarrassment into the hands of nine selected men, persons distinguished for their abilities and candour, and who were adventurers on the same bottom with yourself? Though I do not think you in the possession of any great abilities, yet I will do you the credit to suppose you have sense enough to fall in with the propriety of this proposal, was you not afraid of some investigations which you would not choose should see the light, was you not afraid of some *black action*, which you yourself would be compelled, “even to the teeth,

teeth, and forehead of your faults, to glve in evidence."

I am sufficiently grounded in thinking so, from whatever point of view I look at your conduct in this affair, whether from your own confussed apology, from the real state of facts, which were restored to my memory by Mr. Creighton; and, above all, by [your *wincing* from so candid a motion the instant it was proposed: your objections, I remember, were, that such a motion would be productive of much diffidence between the inside, and outside the bar, as well as disable administration from knowing whom to treat with, the directors or the committee.

In regard to the first part of your fears, I should be glad to know "why create a diffidence?" when you and the rest of the directors had substantially told the proprietary, you did not know how to act: surely it was then necessary for the outside of the bar, who are possessed alike of the public property, to interfere with their advice—a bankrupt, by this rule, may, with equal justice, be diffident of his assignees.

The other part of your objection falls into the same line of absurdity, "that it would disable administration to know whom to treat with,

with, the directors or the committee ;” for though the committee was willing, for their own security, to inspect into the state of their own cash, &c. they did not want to interfere in any other parts of your directorial office ; nor could government, on any pretence whatever, be mistaken where to apply, as they could not either legally, or officially, treat with any other persons but yourselves : but Error is talkative ; and where nothing is meant to be *done*, something must be *said*.

I could readily perceive, the seconding this motion of Mr. Creighton’s gave you some uneasiness ; but you were, in some respect, prepared for the worst ; you had your trusty centinel on the outside the bar, who carefully watched over every circumstance that would militate against the plan *previously* rehearsed to him : he was punctual ; and though I cannot strictly say he performed his *duty*, I will be bold to say, he did his *business*.

And here I find myself under the necessity of doing justice to the *worthy knight*, who filled this *honourable* employment the court day before, by thus publicly declaring it was not him ; and indeed many reasons concurred why he should be, for awhile, misplaced. The knight,

knight, when posted on his former duty, shewed too much warmth of temper, as well as too conspicuous a zeal to serve his *employers*; in consequence of which he was immediately known to be a *mercenary*; beside, the dignity of his title, and the remarkableness of his person, readily pointed him out; and, if we add to all this, the *recency* of the transaction, we must all allow you to have shewn yourself the skilful general in the remove.

But as I choose to mention the present centinel by his title rather than his name, I will call him your IMPY (or little *Imp*) and a faithful one he was his conduct shewed; for no sooner he heard the motion, but he collected all his abilities to oppose it, by *endeavouring* to take the whole of the arguments in opposition to pieces, and by stepping out of the *dryness* of his profession, to be comical in the *mangling* of a very trite anecdote—the warmth of his efforts plunged him into obscurities and error; he was besides sore from a kick of Mr. Creighton's, which, though not particularly levelled at him, happened to take place on a wound which had not been sufficiently skinned over, these operating, at one time, increased his *roaring*, to the confusion of you and

and the rest of the directors in the secret; but to the pity and contempt of the independent part of the proprietors, as to be harmless, though by impotence, obtains some degree of compassion.

Finding himself thus foiled in declamation, he had recourse to *numbers*, the last, yet too certain, resource of corruption; not but he often attempted to convince, from his *oratory*, previous to this disposition; but finding that, by every effort, he got more and more embarrassed; and observing, from the sneers of many about him, that they looked upon the man who talked loudest of his honour, when it was unimpeached, not to be over burthened with it, he slunk into his seat, and immediately afterwards produced your *fiat* in the *previous question*.

The avidity with which you reached over for this, as well as the settled joy which appeared in your countenance on the occasion, would have sufficiently unveiled the interest you bore in it's success, had it not been previously discovered by the too forward part your industrious agent shared in the whole of the debate. However, as the last push they

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had to make, the independents, outside the bar, set themselves powerfully in opposition to it; by feelingly recounting the miseries which would accrue from dividend lying so long in a state of uncertainty—their honest endeavours were fruitless; and a large majority of proprietors, like the wise parliament of Cromwell, by their vote, implicitly 'gave up their rights to direction, *because* they were unable to preserve them.

Had you, upon these two important questions, as the nature of your office implies, acted with that candour, ingenuity, and attention, which are so highly necessary to constitute the character of chairman of one of the greatest trading companies in the world, and acquainted your constituents, step by step, of every material occurrence which affected, or was likely to affect, their property, then every unforeseen calamity, every casualty which might affect your finances, would, if not remedied, be not laid at your door; and you would have the consolation (which is dearer to a good man than every thing this world can produce) of having done your duty in an important situation, and having received
from

from your constituents this heart-felt eulogium,
 “ Well done thou good and faithful servant.”

But, as you have acted, what a falling off is here!—Instead of seizing on the first moment of remedying the horrible crimes committed by your servants in Bengal, &c. instead of calling a general court, and laying your first dispatches before them, and honestly asking their advice for the speediest and most effectual remedies, you *unfeelingly* permitted the robber and the murderer to stalk abroad with impunity, nor were you roused till the voice of oppression and blood cried aloud for vengeance in a court of proprietary.

When you were at last roused to this act of justice, how have you acted? Have you come before your constituents with contrition for what you have done, or a steady purpose to make up for the past by the future? No! like your grand archetype in profit and loss, Mr. Thomas Inkle, of *spectatorial* memory, you avail yourself of your constituents misfortunes, and rise in your demands in proportion to their sufferings; hence, though you *seemingly* acquainted the general court their advice was all you wanted, and that the mode of redress was at their op-

tion to *model as they please*, yet your influence operated directly contrary through the docility and attention of your agents.

Instead then of the miserable natives of Bengal, Fort St. George, and Bombay—after a series of oppressions, expecting redress, let us see what this redress is likely to be.

Supervisors will be appointed, principally of your choosing, with a long train of hungry dependents, persons, in all probability, unacquainted with the country, its laws, or grievances.—Let me ask then upon what principle these people go out? When the calculations are six to one against a man's ever returning, when the extreme heat of the climate must be very disagreeable to an European constitution, and, above all, when the tearing himself from connexions at home must be very painful. Under all these disadvantages, it is more than probable, you will get none to accept this commission, flattering as it is in many circumstances, but those whose situations are not the most comfortable here, or those who have set up Mammon for their idol?—Under either description what must become of the poor natives?—Large salaries, expensive tables, and

and numerous perquisites, are the supervisor's immediate appointments—but who will take upon him to count their long catalogue of secret exactions?

It is by no means difficult for a person, tolerably acquainted with human nature, and with the latitude of such an extensive commission, to figure to himself the private language of a supervisor on this occasion.

May he not say “I have laboured very hard for this employment, through the interests of my friends, who have exerted their every sinew for this purpose, and from whom, after such obligations, I never can expect further favour, how then am I to avail myself of this situation, which I am to look on as my dernier resource? Is it not my interest to proportion my emoluments to their trouble (perhaps to their *expence*.) I have examples of many in subordinate situations to mine, who, in the course of a few years, have gleaned from this spot not only riches but dignity for life, and who now live splendidly, open to no reproach, but that of their own consciences? and shall I, placed at the fountain head, with unlimited power
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in my hand, do *less*, when it is in my power to do *more*?"

As we never want arguments to win us over to the side we previously decide on, he might be this time warm himself not only to the *prudence* of enriching himself at any rate, but the *propriety*, and *justice* of it; "for," continues he "have I hitherto born the blights of fortune with some degree of constancy, and shall I now turn my back upon her, when she shines in her meridian splendor? Shall *Providence*, who has hitherto chastened me, no doubt, for it's own wise purposes, by the frowns of adversity, think proper now, in return, to reward me? And shall I slight such proffered *graves*? Oh, no! there is a tide in the affairs of men, which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune—omitted—the voyage is bound in shallows, and in miseries. On such a full sea am I now at float, nor will I lose my venture."

But that I should not have my own imagination, under the imputation of being overheated on this occasion, and ascribe sentiments to others they may not possess, let us recur to the transactions of our company, a few years back, and they will furnish us with a recent example,

example, which will come home to every man's breast.

When Lord Clive was sent over to India—his appointments were made out, as desirable, and splendid, as any person, intent on increasing his fortune, could reasonably expect. His annual salary was six thousand pounds, and his jaghire was to be continued to him for ten years. The reasons for so large an appointment were not ill founded, and calculated to operate on a grateful heart; as by it he was supposed to be raised above the attention to any matters but what applied to the good of the company; he was likewise particularly bound not to trade in any shape, nor to receive any other emolument whatever from his office.

But how did he answer the expectations of the company? He had no sooner set foot in Bengal, but he, and his associates, monopolized the trade in beetle nut, salt, and tobacco, which, by their instructions, they were expressly ordered by the company to restore to the natives, as it had been previously found a principal source of the disorders which prevailed in that country.—The noble Lord had
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five shares ; the value of each amounting to three or four thousand pounds a year, his friends enjoyed the rest.

Thus were the grievances of the natives redressed ! A tyrant was sent amongst them, whose milder government was plunder and exaction ; whilst we at home were draining our coffers to support such iniquitous purposes. — What reason have we then for supposing that other men will behave with more reserve and moderation, when we see before us, in this instance, a mind which had every inducement to be honest, debauched by excess of power ?

But we are told, in the present supervision, we shall have *six* principals to be a check on the rapacity of each other ? But is it supposable these *six* will be more ready to concur in opinion, where some of their interests may not be so immediately concerned as others ? — or that even, in points of common advice, abstracted from their interest, their conceptions of matters will so mutually coincide, as to operate unanimously ?

I remember, about three years ago, when the late supervision was on foot, a very remarkable instance of the force of disagreement

of two of the supervisors (though there was but *three* in all) about the mode of collecting the duties. Mr. Scrafton declared, under his hand, that none were fit for collectors of those duties but *blacks*; because the odium of oppression would fall upon the natives rather than upon the English; never considering, at the same time, that the great end of their mission was to extirpate all oppression. Mr. Vansittart, another supervisor, roundly asserted that *whites* were the only persons that ought to be employed. What prospect was there then of these two servants of the company benefiting it by their services? God knows what may be consequences of a dissension so strongly supported by such unlimited powers, did not the grave soon after cover them from such a trial, there too let their other errors be buried in oblivion.

These facts before us, are we not bold in prophesying what will follow? We shall be obliged soon after to send out a second commission to rectify the abuses of the present, and so on without end, till we are, like the Dutch East India company, obliged to vest some one man with absolute power; a plan, by which

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a few overgrown individuals will be enabled to swallow up all property, and to become, like the Roman dictators, the masters of the company.

But I am relieved from this painful prospect, by the embarrassed situation of your affairs at present; for though your grand object was to distress the company by the appointment of a supervision, which you may manage as you please, I hope you have, like the fate of many over sanguine *knowing ones*, run down the game to be possessed by another: government has watched you in the pursuit, and seeing you have lost your way, may take the hunted proprietary under it's own protection.

But these are in some respect distant prospects, and may be looked on only in that light, when we compare them to your postponing a *declaration of the dividend till Christmas next*. I must confess myself under the greatest temptation of being betrayed into passion whenever I think of this manœuvre, in whatever stage of it's tearing it presents itself. When I see a man continually shifting, and turning, assuming the shapes of Proteus, and the duplicity of a Machiavel to bring about the

the destruction of thousands, and all for the purposes of adding to a fortune, which he wants dignity to preside over, spirit to enjoy.

If one part of the proprietors were not as dead to all sense of reflection, as others were to the interest of the company, surely they could never subscribe to a vote, which gives you, and the rest of the directors, such unlimited powers to act till that period. I shall be probably told by you, as I have often been so before, in a public court, of your *candour*, and *honesty*, and “that if we will not trust your court of directors, what will become of the company?” But I have trusted you too long, and found you WHAT? But, I will not soil my paper?

Nor (was I permitted to whisper one circumstance to your ear) could you have assurance to desire me to trust you any longer. That circumstance should be to remind you of your late *generous* attempt in monopolizing the article of *allum*; an action which carries every stigma of oppression and dishonour on the face of it, and which, in a country where *equity* triumphed over the chicanery of law, would reprobate you to the most severe, and condign punishments; but, I am, in some

respect, consoled in my feelings on this occasion, as I have just heard you, and your infamous adherents are likely to lose forty thousand pounds by the infernal speculation.

After this knowledge of what you are capable of doing when you have an opportunity, I flatter myself, I am, in some respect, qualified to predict what may be your manœuvres at this critical juncture: Am I not justified then in saying, that though you did not think proper to declare the dividend on the 23d of last September, under the pretence of not knowing how the estimates would turn out, or what prospect you had of getting money from government—that you could, if not precisely certain, at least give a very near guess—Does not this knowledge then give you an advantage over every one outside the bar, in the buying or selling stock during that time, and will you not make use of it? Have you not it in your power, during this undeclared state of the dividend, to circulate reports, paragraphs, extracts of letters, with all the long train of *jobbing* of which you are perfect master of? and have you not likewise an opportunity, through your agents, which there can be

be no doubt you will avail yourself, of buying such and such commodities at your sales, as you think most likely to bear a price when the dividend is declared.

Such is the scene of *gambling* you have opened for yourself, and the rest of the directors in the secret, till next Christmas; which you have lived too long in the Alley not to make the best use of, particularly as, like the rest of your brother sharpers, you have the superior advantages of playing with loaded dice in your pockets. When that period arrives to be sure it will discover much; and many credulous proprietors, who now think the pompous titles of Sir GEORGE COLEBROOKE, BARONET, Sir JAMES COCKBURNE, BARONET, with twenty-two other directors of opulence and consequence, as sufficient pledges for their property—may, in their turn, question and arraign. But what will this signify? the dice are thrown—You will have the differences in your pockets, and as to the rest—why, as your *feeling* companion in the play says “Let the world talk and be damned.”

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Yet though I think thus meanly of your parts, except in the acquisition of money, which, by your conduct, you seem to have set up entirely as your idol; though I have a less opinion of your delicacy, and a still less of your courage (witness the affair with Mr. Bolts) I should never have stationed you in the situation I have described you, through the course of this letter, had not I estimated your character more by your *morals* than your *faculties*; these have tempted me to draw forth a pen, through life, I thank God, much better employed than in raking through the actions of a Colebrooke, though I think, at present, not altogether unprofitably, as it may open the eyes of the undiscerning to behold, under the *disguise* of their guardian—their greatest enemy.

Your original profession, as an English merchant, I honour and respect; it is a first-rate character in any country, much more so in a commercial one, whose sinews are only strengthened by mutual exports; it is the mother of seamen, the friend of industry, the parent of wealth, and the reservoir of munificence; in short, it is a profession, in every respect, worthy

worthy the transports of the poet, when he says,

"Priests pray for blessings—merchants pour them down."

What then shall I say of *you*? You who have left this fair station, unimpelled by any other consideration than the lust of lucre, "to batter on a moor;"—who have departed from the broad honest line of industry, the walk of reputable commerce, to creep in the narrow windings of an *Alley*; the last sad refuge of the vicious and unfortunate; where trick and deceit constitute knowledge and experience, and where you can receive no benefit, but at the hands of distress.

But it seems you are above reprehension, and "*despise* to look at any thing in print that animadverts on your conduct;" that you are *afraid* to do so, I will readily believe; but that you *despise* doing so, is what I never can; as contempt generally implies a virtuous mind turning it's back upon calumny; nor am I wholly satisfied you do not take a peep at every thing that is thrown out upon paper against you, from the apprehension of thinking

thinking, it may be still worse.—Under this supposition then “Sit you down, and let me wring your heart, for so I shall if it be made of penetrable stuff, if damned custom have not brazed it so, that it is proof and bulwark against sense.”

From the griping penury of your father, you first came into notice by the possession of a fortune rarely the lot of an individual; this fortune was soon after considerably encreased by the death of your elder brother, which gave along with it a title of dignity. In this fair outset of life, what an ornament might you have been to the mercantile world? But, as you have acted, what a disgrace! Instead of encreasing that wealth by honourable means, instead of smoothing, and protecting the paths of commerce, instead of gratifying those fine feelings of benevolence, which alone make large possessions enviable; instead of creating happiness around you and looking forward, with an honest emulation, for a niche in the temple of city worthies—how have you turned your back upon them all! To be RICH was alone your object,

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the means, every opportunity which could present itself, within the verge of the law.

With this favourite axiom ever in your view, the several transmutations of gold were alternately exerted; sometimes you appeared under the character of a Jew broker trading in *bullion*, and *lottery tickets*; sometimes as a banker, and West India planter; one month you would adopt the character of an English merchant, (as what deception will not vice make use of) for the purposes of whipping into an infamous monopolizer the next: in short, after many years going through this pantomime performance, you at last assumed the post of *perpetual director* of the East India company.

Here, from the advantages of being behind the curtain, and consequently knowing the moment you should come on in *your parts*, you, alternately, represented the characters of *bull*, and *bear*. In these, if you did not get *reputation*, you brought great *receipts*: the *Alley* was crowded every time you made your appearance, and you had the art of reversing an observation long since founded, that of communicating

municating *feelings* to others, though you possessed none yourself:

To close the whole of your character, after long study, and painful investigation into the business of your profession, after a proper distribution of *General Court puffs*, you lately thought proper to appear in a *New Tragedy* of your own composing (and in which you performed the part of a *principal Bull*) where, without the powers of elocution, the grace of action, or dignity of passion, you not only cleared above 80,000*l.* but impressed, upon a numerous audience, such a *lasting sense of your performance*, as, in all probability, will *affect* their children's children.

I shall now dismiss you from my pen, which I begin to think you have blackened too long, with a word of *caution*; you are entitled to this, as the most abandoned characters claim some share of our pity:—From a long, and intimate knowledge of you, I know you to be devoid of feeling. I flatter myself I shall be credited for this position when I assert, that I have seen the orphan, and the widow plundered by you unheeded—yet hear me!—though your bosom has had
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callosity to withstand the silent eloquence of their unprotected condition, it may not be proof against some one oppressed hand, armed with wrongs, with vengeance, and despair.

F I N I S.